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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1009

February 14, 2017

COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY

VICE CHAIRMAN OF COURTS, INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY AND THE INTERNET

REGULATORY REFORM, COMMERCIAL AND
ANTITRUST LAW

COMMITTEE ON RULES

VICE CHAIRMAN OF
HOUSE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

I am writing to recommend Paul Belk for the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. Mr. Belk is the President and CEO of North Georgia Network (NGN), a rural Internet Service Provider that services rural areas of Georgia.

In the Ninth District of Georgia, and many other districts across the country, internet is a vital resource that is increasingly difficult to access because of regulatory barriers, decreasing deployment of new broadband infrastructure, and hurdles to market entry. These impediments—combined with a lack of competition—have hurt Northeast Georgians' ability to access reliable broadband, which in turn hurts public safety, business development, and quality of life.

Mr. Belk, however, has taken action to address these problems and provide expanded Internet access. NGN, under Mr. Belk's leadership, has provided Internet access for more Georgians by going into rural communities that previously had only a single provider, thus driving competing providers to upgrade technologies and decrease prices. In doing so, Mr. Belk has directly impacted the safety, business, and quality of life of countless Georgians.

Mr. Belk's impact extends beyond the reaches of Northeast Georgia. He oversees a fiber optic network spanning several eastern states, and is a founder of the Fiber Network Owners Alliance (FNA) which has worked with other small fiber networks to provide better broadband for more Americans. Mr. Belk has also worked to set higher broadband standards for the citizens of Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama, Virginia, and Washington D.C.

Throughout his years of experience in telecommunications and broadband, Mr. Belk has worked to equalize urban and rural centers because he has seen how the Internet can change even the smallest of communities into those of global significance.

For the reasons detailed above, I urge you to consider Mr. Paul Belk for a position on Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Collins", written over the printed name.

Doug Collins

Ninth Congressional District of Georgia



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

February 23, 2017

The Honorable Doug Collins
U.S. House of Representatives
1504 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Collins:

Thank you for your letter supporting the appointment of Mr. Paul Belk, President and CEO of North Georgia Network, to serve on the Commission's Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee (BDAC). We will certainly consider your recommendation and Mr. Belk's impressive resume as the Commission reviews the nominations for the BDAC.

Last September, I proposed what I called a Digital Empowerment Agenda—a blueprint of policies that would accelerate the deployment of high-speed Internet access, or broadband, in communities across the country, including rural America. The BDAC is intended to provide an effective means for stakeholders to exchange ideas and develop recommendations to the Commission on broadband deployment. Its mission will be to identify regulatory barriers to infrastructure investment and to make recommendations on reducing and/or removing them, which will in turn enhance the Commission's ability to carry out its statutory responsibility to encourage broadband deployment to all Americans.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Your views are very important and will be entered into the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai